

## **Appendix H: Vessel Captain, Crew and Observer Responsibilities**

### **Vessel's Responsibilities**

The vessel's responsibilities are outlined in Appendix F (NOAA Technical Memorandum-NMFS-SEFSC-524). The animals safety and removal of gear are the vessel's responsibility.

### **Observer & Vessel Captain and Crew Responsibilities**

All parties should minimize any possible injury to the animal while on deck, either by the animal bumping into objects on board or by objects falling on the animal due to the boat movement. In addition, all parties are responsible for storing the turtle in the shade, keeping the animal moist and maintaining an acceptable body temperature. Moisture can be preserved by either covering the animal's body with a wet towel or by applying petroleum jelly on its skin and carapace. The animal's body temperature should not fall below 60° F and should be maintained around the water temperature of the capture location and similar to the water temperature of the release site.

### **Observer Responsibilities**

The observer is to observe normal fishing operations and complete a Sea Turtle Life History Form for every sea turtle interacting with fishing gear. The observer is responsible for collecting and recording the biological data on the sea turtles (measuring, tagging, biopsying, etc). Crew assistance may be requested to complete these tasks. The animals' behaviors and swimming and diving abilities should be monitored after the release and noted on the form. The observer may educate the crew on known ways to dehook, disentangle, or use mouth openers and gags on an animal but are not to actually participate. On certain trips, such as the NED experiment, the observer is also responsible for sending daily e-mails to the turtle coordinator relaying data on effort and protected species interactions.